

VZCZCXRO2099
PP RUEHLH RUEHPW
DE RUEHIL #1122/01 1451205
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 251205Z MAY 09
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2882
INFO RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL PRIORITY 0333
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 0419
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 4938
RUEHKP/AMCONSUL KARACHI PRIORITY 1684
RUEHLH/AMCONSUL LAHORE PRIORITY 7284
RUEHPW/AMCONSUL PESHAWAR PRIORITY 6223
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 9463
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 3959

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 04 ISLAMABAD 001122

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAID](#) [ECON](#) [IO](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [PK](#) [PREF](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#)
SUBJECT: PAKISTAN MILITARY CLAIM MINGORA; PRIME MINISTER
CALLS FOR MORE IDP SUPPORT

11. (SBU) Summary. Pakistan military operations continued on May 25, as the troops continued efforts to recapture the main Swat city of Mingora and secure major intersections and surrounding areas. Major General Athar Abbas, the Director General's Inter-Services Public Relations (DG ISPR) spokesman, reported in a May 24 press conference that the operations in Mingora will be "painfully slow" despite the operational gains being made by the military. Media reports indicate that "thousands" of South Waziristan citizens are fleeing for fear of upcoming military operations in their agency. The Prime Minister announced that the world "should do more for the internally displaced persons (IDPs)." The Information Minister announced that the federal Special Support Group had assessed the costs associated with the rehabilitation portion of the Prime Minister's National Response Plan and determined that this phase would require USD 1 billion (approximately PKR 80 billion) to complete. The religious party Jamaat-e-Islami continued to hold anti-American rallies in Islamabad on May 24, saying that the Government of Pakistan should not support USG policies and should stop the operations in Swat. End Summary.

MILITARY UPDATE

SWAT District, Malakand Division, Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP):

12. (SBU) Military operations continued in Mingora, the principal city within Swat, on May 25, as the curfew in Swat remains in effect for the twentieth day. In a press conference on May 24, Major General Athar Abbas, the Inter-Services Public Relations (DG ISPR) spokesman, reported that the operations in Mingora will be "painfully slow." Abbas, however, also reported that the Pakistan Military (PakMil) had made steady progress in Swat, capturing major cities, militant hideouts, and intersections, including a crossing that became notorious for Taliban beheadings. In the village of Peochar, a stronghold of the Swat Taliban, PakMil reportedly seized a cache of arms and a factory for manufacturing bombs and improvised explosive devices (IEDs). He noted that at this point in the Mingora operations, ten militants and three PakMil soldiers had been killed and 14 Taliban had been arrested. No numbers of civilian casualties were reported in the media. PakMil troops had also encountered 12 IEDs and defused four of them.

13. (SBU) Abbas noted that due to the ongoing operations, 3000

residents were trapped in the city of Kanju, a Swat city north of Mingora. The operations are preventing the residents from leaving or relief supplies from reaching the area. (Note: Prime Minister Yousef Gilani told Ambassador on May 25 that there were approximately 70,000 residents trapped throughout Swat. End note.)

LOWER DIR District, Malakand Division, NWFP:

¶4. (SBU) In Lower Dir, the curfew will remain relaxed until 1600 on May 25, except for Chakdara, a city in southern Lower Dir near the Swat border. Local press reports note district-wide shortages in fuel with heavy price gouging taking place.

CHARSADDA District, Malakand Division, NWFP:

¶5. (SBU) In Charsadda, the police claimed to have caught seven Taliban in a raid on a madrassah; those arrested reportedly included Qari Insanullah, a Taliban commander accused of conducting attacks in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Police recovered three suicide jackets, explosives and assault rifles.

ORAKZAI Agency, Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA):

¶6. (SBU) Pakistani jets and helicopter gunships attacked Taliban hideouts in Orakzai, including reported strongholds of Hakimullah Mehsud, Baitullah Mehsud's deputy. According to the media, Tehrik-e-Taliban commander Ehsanullah and twelve other Taliban were killed in these attacks. (septel)

ISLAMABAD 00001122 002 OF 004

SOUTH WAZIRISTAN Agency, FATA:

¶7. (SBU) Press reported that two soldiers were killed in South Waziristan when militants attacked a Frontier Corps (FC) fort. The media continue to report that "thousands" of Waziristan residents are fleeing in anticipation of operations by the PakMil. (Note: U.S. Consulate Peshawar contacts report that Mehsuds are leaving South Waziristan via North Waziristan and reiterated that several thousand departing is not an unreasonable estimate. End note.)

¶8. (U) Please see the weekly talibanization cable from U.S. Consulate Peshawar for further reporting on militant activities throughout the NWFP and FATA.

CURRENT CONDITIONS FOR IDPS

GOP actions:

¶9. (U) In a press conference on May 25, Information Minister Qamar Zaman Kaira, head of the federal Special Support Group (SSG), announced that the SSG had completed its assessment of the costs expected to be associated with the rehabilitation phase of the Prime Minister's National Response Plan, and in order to complete the phase, it would cost USD 1 billion (approximately PKR 80 billion). Kaira also reported that the current IDP figures stood at over 2.7 million internally displaced persons (IDPs). (Note: The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) report the numbers to be at 2.3 million registered IDPs. End note.) Kaira noted that the SSG spent the day briefing various GOP ministries on the current IDP situation and the associated costs.

¶10. (U) PakMil reported in the press that it was extending delivery of relief supplies, to include sending 15 trucks of relief goods to the besieged people in Maidan, Lower Dir (home of Maulana Sufi Mohammad), Bahrain and Kalam (both cities within Swat). The Pakistan Army reports that it has donated 510 tons of food from its daily quota, which includes

flour, pulses, sugar and ghee (or clarified butter).

¶11. (U) Although still being developed and not yet fully operational, the NWFP Emergency Response Unit (ERU) website contains information on IDP numbers, registration points, camps, sectoral responsibilities, and points of contact. The address is [http://www.helpidp.org/who is doing what.php](http://www.helpidp.org/who%20is%20doing%20what.php).

Humanitarian Situation:

¶12. (U) OCHA reported that the 27 current camps, which are hosting more than 150,000 IDPs, have electricity and regular health service provisions. OCHA is currently planning for contingencies for the upcoming monsoon season, which typically starts in July and lasts until August or September.

¶13. (U) According to OCHA, IDP registration is beset with problems, including fraud and lack of registration capacities. They estimate that as many as 30 percent of the 2.3 million IDPs registered with the GOP Ministry of Social Welfare are fraudulent, and people are registering with fake identity cards or registering multiple times for purposes of benefits. (Note: The National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA), which is responsible for issuing the national identity cards, has recently assumed responsibility for entering all IDP registration into a database in order to eliminate duplications and verify population numbers. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) told Embassy that NADRA will complete data entry by the end of May. End note.) OCHA also estimates that only 60 percent of the host families for IDPs are receiving some level of assistance, largely due to access and fraud issues, and many of the host families are receiving duplicate assistance.

Humanitarian Coordination:

¶14. (U) The Pakistan Humanitarian Forum, a consortium of 29

ISLAMABAD 00001122 003 OF 004

international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working in Pakistan, has released a consolidated report of approximately fifteen NGO rapid assessments conducted within the first three days of the recent displacement in Mardan and Swabi districts. The combined assessments identified humanitarian needs, including hygiene kits, household supplies, safe drinking water, health services, food assistance, livelihoods interventions (cash grants or vouchers), and protection services for female-headed households, unaccompanied children, and other vulnerable populations. However, the NGOs each conducted the initial assessments quickly, without overall coordination on humanitarian sectors or geographic locations covered, resulting in gaps in the data.

¶15. (U) A major international humanitarian organization working in Pakistan informed the Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) of the need for a comprehensive assessment of the IDP situation. One possibility would be using the Multi-cluster Rapid Assessment Mechanism (MCRAM) methodology, which was used during the Balochistan earthquake response in November 2008. The MCRAM assessment methodology includes questions from each humanitarian sector and is conducted by the UN agencies and NGOs, in coordination with the GOP.

¶16. (U) The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) has included a request to fund the MCRAM assessment in the revised UN Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP). NGOs had previously agreed not to conduct separate assessments if the MCRAM assessment were done within 72 hours of a humanitarian emergency. MCRAM was not done when the recent displacement began in early May due to lack of available funding.

Food Assistance:

¶17. (U) According to OCHA, meals in camps are being provided by caterers three times per day, at a cost of PKR 85

(approximately USD 1) per person, per day. UNHCR informed Embassy on May 25 that dry food rations and firewood provisions would be arranged in the camps shortly, in some camps as soon as this week.

Health:

¶18. (U) OCHA noted that IDPs in the camps have good access to primary health care provided by NGOs, including International Medical Corps and Merlin, as well as the UN World Health Organization (WHO), which with UNICEF is the cluster lead.

¶19. (U) WHO has recorded increasing cases of diarrhea in the camps and is investigating the source by testing the food and water provided to the IDPs. WHO suspects that the locally produced ice supplied by GOP authorities may be the source of the problem, but this has yet to be confirmed.

POLITICAL UPDATE

¶20. (SBU) On May 24, Prime Minister Gilani pleaded that the world "should do more for the IDPs." He announced that the operations in Swat would be to the benefit of the world and, therefore, more should be done in humanitarian assistance.

¶21. (SBU) The religious party Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) held another anti-American rally in Islamabad on May 24 in which its leader, Munawar Hassan, called for an end to military operations that were killing innocent civilians. He accused the Government of Pakistan (GOP) of pursuing pro-American and "mischievous" policies.

¶22. (SBU) Meanwhile, a group of moderate religious leaders, headed by madrassah Jamia Naemia leader Safaz Naeemi, organized an anti-Taliban rally for June 2 in Lahore.

¶23. (SBU) The public debate about where the IDPs should be housed continued after several days of violent protests in Sindh province, organized by the Jiay Sindh Quami Mahaz (JSQM) party and the Muttahida Quami Movement (MQM) against locating IDPs in Sindh. The mohajir-based MQM has a growing

ISLAMABAD 00001122 004 OF 004

concern about the presence in Karachi of Pashtuns fleeing combat in the FATA. (Note: Even before the IDP crisis, there were between 3 million and 4 million Pashtuns in Karachi. End note.) The Chief Ministers of Sindh and Punjab have welcomed publicly the IDPs but want them to be registered. The GOP and NWFP governments prefer the IDPs be housed as close to their homes as possible to facilitate returns in a more timely fashion.
PATTERSON